S 5211

A LITTLE HANDFUL OF *CORDIAL COMFORTS*:

Scattered thorowout several *Answers*, to Sixteen *Questions*, and *Objections* following.

Intended chiefly for the good of those that walk mournfully before God;

And are worthy to be gathered up, and regarded, of all such as wish well to their own Peace.

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Believe, and Live.

The Fifth Edition, with Additions.

LONDON,

Printed by *T. Moore*, & *J. Ashburne*, for *H. Sawbridge*, at the *Bible* on *Ludgate-Hill*. 1684.

A LITTLE HANDFUL OF CORDIAL COMFORTS.

Scattered throughout several *Answers* to certain *Questions* and *Objections* following.

The First Question.

O Wretched Man that I am, who shall Deliver me from the Wrath to Come? for my Sins are many, and mine Iniquity is great; And if the Lord should deal with me according to his Justice, and my Deserts, my Portion must needs be in the Lake of Fire, with the Devil and his Angels. For the Scripture

Pronounceth every Man Curſed, that continueth not in all things, written in the Book of the Law, to do them, Gal. 3. 10. *Shew me therefore, (I beſeech you,) ſhew me, what Courſe to take, to come out of this Miſery; ſhew me the way how to get the Pardon of my Sin, and the Favour of God. I care for nothing but this, neither is there any thing in the World, that I do deſire, in Compariſon of this.*

Anſwer.

This is that (indeed) which of all other things doth moſt concern us. For upon the Pardon of our Sins, and Peace with God, Depends all Solid Comforts while we are here, and the Eternal Salvation of our moſt Precious Souls hereafter. And therefore for our better, both Direction and Conſolation in this behalf, let us take notice of this that follows.

There is a way for Men to come out of the Miſery of Sin, and to Obtain and Enjoy the Mercy and Favour of Almighty God, and that is *Faith in Chriſt*: This is the Way, and there is none but this; neither is there any thing in the World, that can

can help us to the Pardon of our Sins, to the Love of God, and to the Salvation of our Souls, but only *Faith in the Lord Jesus.*

That this is the way, is apparent enough by the Anſwer which was given by *Paul* and *Silas*, *Acts* 16. 31. For when the Keeper of the Priſon cryed out with Trembling, *Sirs, what muſt I do to be Saved?* They made him this Anſwer, *Believe in the Lord Jeſus, and thou ſhalt be Saved.* There is in *Chriſt*, Sufficiency enough, for the Obtaining of our Pardon, and the procuring of our Peace; and there is in Faith, Ability enough to make us partakers of *Chriſts* Sufficiency. *Chriſt* is the only way whereby we come unto Eternal Life, and *Faith* is the only way whereby we come to be partakers of *Chriſt*; by *Faith* we come unto him, and through *Him* unto God.

And that we may the better know, that there is in *Chriſt*, Sufficiency enough for the Pardon of our Sins, and the Salvation of our Souls, let us conſider a little, both who *Chriſt* is, and alſo what he hath done for the working out of our Deliverance, and the Procuring of our Peace.

The Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, is the Eternal Son of *God*, who Pittying that Sinful and Miſerable Condition, whereinto we were all brought by the Diſobedience of our firſt Parents, undertook to Mediate the matter betwixt God and us, and to reconcile us again unto God. For the better Effecting of which great work, He came down from Heaven, and was Incarnate by the Holy Ghoſt of the Virgin *Mary*, and was made Man, yea in all things like unto other Men, ſave only in Sin, that ſo he might the better make us free from all Sin. Being found thus in Faſhion as a Man, he ſet himſelf in our ſtead, and for us Men, and our Salvation he became Obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs. And by his *Obedience* and *Death*, He hath perfectly alone by himſelf accompliſhed *whatever* was requiſite for our Salvation.

The Wretchedneſs of our Condition, is briefly this: We all like Sheep have gone aſtray, neither have we only Omitted thoſe Duties, which the Law requires, but we have alſo Committed thoſe Evils, which the Law forbids; and as the *want of Righteouſneſs* doth exclude us from the Fa-

vour of God, aud the Kingdom of Heaven: ſo the *Guiltineſs of Sin* doth expoſe us to the Wrath of God, and the Damnation of Hell. But the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* hath fulfilled all *Righteouſneſs*. For in his Life, He performed as much *Obedience*, as the Law in Rigour could exact; and by Suffering Death upon the Croſs, he under-went as much *Puniſhment*, as could be required of Sinners, in the Severity of Juſtice; and ſo by his *Death* and *Obedience* hath he provided againſt our double Miſery. For by his *Sufferings* upon the Croſs, the Juſtice of God is Satisfied, and his Wrath appeaſed; and by his *Obedience*, the Law is fulfilled, and we are Accepted. And as by his *Death* comes the Pardon of Sin, and Deliverance from Wrath: ſo by his *Obedience* comes the Imputation of Righteouſneſs, and Life Everlaſting. All which, as they were done in our Nature, ſo they were done for us, and in our behalf, he ſtood in the place of Sinners, that we might be Numbered among the Righteous; He took our Sins upon him, that he might put his *Obedience* upon us; the Chaſtiſement of our Peace was upon him, that with his Stripes we may be

healed; He was made a Curſe for us, that he might Redeem us from it; He was Sin for us, that knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 22.

And the better to aſſure us that by his Death upon the Croſs, there was paid a Price Sufficient enough for the procuring of our Pardon, he Aroſe again from the Dead; which he could not have done, if the Juſtice of God had not been Satisfied to the very full in every particular. For as Sin is the Sting of Death, and the only thing that makes Death Terrible: ſo it is the Strength of Death, and it is that only that doth give Death Dominion over us: Sin is the Lock, Bar, and Bolt, that makes faſt the Gates of Death; and as the Door cannot be opened to let out a Priſoner, till the Bar be removed; ſo there is no eſcaping from Death, until Sin be taken out of the Way. *Chriſt* therefore, by Riſing from the Dead, hath mightily declared unto us, that he hath paid the utmoſt Farthing of our Debts, and that by his Death he hath fully Satisfied the Juſtice of God. So that now, by Virtue of his Sufferings, the *greateſt* Sins are made

made Pardonable, and there is a way ſet open for the *worſt* Sinners, both to Grace and Glory. *I ſay*, even for the *worſt* Sinners. There is *no Man* now, that can deny himſelf to be *capable* of Grace; there are too many, who from the greatneſs of Gods Mercy, do without any cauſe preſume to Sin: But there is no Man, who from the Heinouſneſs of his Sins, hath any juſt cauſe to deſpair of Mercy; For though our Sins be many, yet the Mercies of God are more; though they be great, yet his Mercies are above them; He is Rich in Mercy, yea, his Mercy is Infinite, ſo that though he have ſpent much Mercy already upon our Fore-Fathers, yet he hath Mercy enough in Store for us alſo; with him there is Plenty of forgiveneſs, and his mercy endureth for ever: And the Merits of *Chriſt* are of the ſame Nature, for he is *Mighty to ſave*, and he is the *ſame for ever*, and through the Riches of theſe Merits of *Chriſt*, there is a way ſet open, even for the *worſt Sinners*, to become partakers of the Riches of the Mercies of God. Now if *any Man* Sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, *Jeſus Chriſt* the Righteous, and he is the Propi-

tiation for our Sins, &c. 1 *John* 2. 1, 2. And though the time of his abode upon Earth in the Days of his Fleſh were but ſhort, though his Sufferings were but for a Seaſon; yet ſuch was, and is the Dignity of his Perſon, (being the Eternal Son of God) that his *Sufferings* and *Obedience* are *Infinitely Meritorious*, and his Bloud is able to Cleanſe us from *all* unrighteouſneſs: So that we may well ſay with the Apoſtle, *Who is he that Condemneth? It is Chriſt that Died, or rather who is riſen again, and now maketh Interceſſion for us*, *Rom.* 8. 33, 34. But let no Man turn this Doctrine of Comfort to a Liberty of Sinning: againſt the *greateſt Sins* there is hopes in *Chriſt* for *Penitent Believers*. But becauſe there is Mercy with God, ſhall we therefore go on in Sin? God forbid; there is Mercy with him, and therefore he muſt be Feared. But if any ſhall preſume to Sin, becauſe there is Mercy with God, through *Jeſus Chriſt*; inſtead of Mercy, that Man is like to meet with nothing but Juſtice; For as Merciful as God is, and as all Sufficient as the Death of *Chriſt* is, there is no Mercy

for ſuch as go on ſtill in their Wicked-
ſs.

And thus you ſee that *Chriſt* is Mighty
ough to ſave us from our Sins, and to
concile us unto *God*: Now that we
y have Benefit by this Suffiency of
riſt, we muſt lay hold upon it by a
vely Faith. This is that which Unites
unto *Chriſt*, and makes us one with
m; This is that which gives us In-
reſt in him, and makes us Partakers of
s Merits; This makes the *Death* and
edience of *Chriſt* as Verily our
vn, and as Effectual for the Pardon
our Sins, and the *S*alvation of our
uls, as if they had been Per-
rmed by our very ſelves. So that if
e do Truly *Believe in the Lord Jeſus*,
en is *God* well pleaſed with us for his
ke, and by Vertue of his Merits, be-
g made ours by Faith, our Sins are all
rdoned, and our Souls and Bodies ſhall
Eternally *S*aved. And ſo much the
ripture doth plainly Teſtify in ſeveral
aces. As *John* 3. 16. *God* ſo loved the
orld, that he gave his only Begotten
on, that *whoſoever believeth in him*,
ould not Periſh, but have Life Ever-
laſting.

lasting. And again, *Acts* 10. 43. Throu
his Name, *whosoever believeth in h*
shall Receive Remission of sins, (be th
never so Many, never so Heinous.) A
again, *Acts* 13. 38, 39. Be it kno
unto you, that *through this Man*
Preached unto you the Forgiveness
Sins. And *by him all that believe*
Justified from all those things, fr
which they could not be Justified by
Law of *Moses*. By the Law of *M*
we could never have been Acquitted eit
from the *Guiltiness of Sin, or from*
Wrath of God; But we are Delive
from *both, by Faith in Christ*; for b
we Obtain the forgiveness of our Si
and the Salvation of our Souls.

And thus it is Manifest, *That* Ch
is the Way by which we are to Obtain
Pardon of Sin, and Peace with God; *and*
that Faith *is the Way whereby we are m*
Partakers of the Merits of Christ *for*
Justification and Salvation. Proceed
now in a Word, to shew that *nothing*
Christ can Reconcile us unto *God*, and t
nothing but Faith can make us Partak
of *Christ* for our Reconciliation.

There is no way whereby to co

unto *God*, but *onely Chriſt*: It is onely in *Chriſt* that *God* is well Pleaſed; neither is there Salvation in any other. For there is no other Name under the Heaven given among Men, whereby we muſt be Saved, *Acts* 4. 12. Neither is there any other means on our part, whereby to Receive *Chriſt*, but *onely Faith*; And yet unleſs we do Receive him, we get no Benefit by him; and therefore unleſs we do believe in him, we ſhall Periſh in our Sins. And to this Purpoſe ſpeaks our Saviour, *John* 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath Everlaſting Life; and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee Life, but the Wrath of God Abideth on him.* See the Sum of all this, in that place of St. *John*, 1 *Epiſt.* 5. *Chap.* 11, 12, and 13 *Verſes*: *God* hath given to us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not Life. Theſe things have I Written to you, that believe in the Name of the Son of *God*, that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe in the Name of the Son of *God*. By which place it is Plain, that there is a way to

Life?

Life? that *Christ* is the way to it; th
Life is so in him, that it is in no other b
him; that it is so in him, that by b
lieving in him we Obtain Life, a
that it is so in him, that without belie
ing in him, we get no Benefit at all b
him. And thus you have the Truth
the Former Answer. Enlarged and Co
firmed, according to it's several Branches
by which it is manifest, *That Faith in t
Lord Jesus Christ, and nothing else b
onely Faith in him*, can help us to t
Pardon of Sin, the Love of God, a
the Salvation of our Souls.

Hereupon it may be thus Replyed.

The Second Question.

*IF I cannot Obtain the Pardon of my Sins,
the Favour of God, without* Faith
Christ, *I doubt my Condition is Woful, and th
I am yet in my Sins, and Liable unto Wrat
For I fear that I have not this Faith*
Christ, *and that I do not as yet believe
him, Shew me therefore (I pray you) h
I may be Comforted against this Fear, a
how I may know whether I do believe*
Christ, *Yea, or No?*

Answe

Anſwer.

Doubtleſs if we do not believe in *Chriſt*, ur Condition is Woful: For there is no alvation *in any other*; and without *Faith* n him, we get no Benefit by him, but ve are in our Sins, and the Obligation nto Wrath is in full Power and Force gainſt us. For though the Ranſome which Chriſt Paid by his Death upon the Croſs, be a Ranſome Aboundantly Sufficient for the Sins of the *whole World*; yet the Benefit of that Death of his is Beſtow'd on none, but upon ſuch Conditions as *God* himſelf Pleaſeth; which Conditions, for ſuch as be of Years, are *Faith* and *Repentance*; which if we Want, we ſhall be ſure to Periſh in our Sins, not out of any Defect in *Chriſt*, but onely becauſe we want thoſe Conditions, whereby we come to have Intereſt in him, and to be Partakers of his Merits. Now that we may the better know whether we have this Faith in us, yea, or no, (and ſo neither be Deceiv'd with Vain Hopes, nor yet Diſcomforted with Falſe Fears,) Conſider this which follows,

lows, and ſee what Anſwer you ca
make to theſe ſeveral Demands.

Are you Senſible of the Miſery wher
in you are by Reaſon of your Sins
And do you find that you need a Saviour
Do you know who is the Saviour of th
World; Do you know in ſome goo
Meaſure who Chriſt is, and what he hat
done for us, and what the Benefits tha
are to be had by him? Do you know
what a Neceſſity there is of having o
him, and what a Miſery it is to be with
out him, and what we muſt do, if we
would have any Benefit by him? And
do you Verily *believe* that *Chriſt Jeſus*
and none but he, is the Saviour of the
World, and that he hath both done and
Suffered, as the *Scriptures* Teſtifie of
him? Do you Verily believe that there
is no way to Heaven but Chriſt, that
there is no way to get Chriſt but Faith,
and that there is no Part to be had in him
but by Renouncing all other Lords, and
all other Saviours, and by Adhearing
wholly unto him for all our Conſolation
and Salvation? And do you now *Deſire*
from the Heart to be made Partaker of
Chriſt? And do you Sincerely Endea-

vour

ur to Accept of him, and to Embrace
n? And can you be Content for his
ke, to Forſake all things, aud to Un-
rgo any Miſery, rather then to Part
th him? Can you be Content to
ke him (as we ſay) *for Better for*
orſe, and not onely for your *Jeſus* to
ve you from your Sins, but alſo for your
ord, to Command and Diſpoſe of you
His Pleaſure; And is it your Care
know his *Will*? And is it your En-
avour to yeild him an *Univerſal Obe-*
ience? And is it your Practiſe in O-
dience unto him, to Exerciſe your ſelf
keep a Conſcience void of Offence
th toward *God* and toward *Men*, and
onſtantly and Conſcionably to deny all
ngodlineſs and Worldly Luſts, and to
ve Godly, and Righteouſly, and Soberly
this preſent World? Do you thus
ccept of Chriſt, and *Submit* unto him?
ay, is it your *Harty Deſire*, *and Un-*
ined Endeavour ſo to do? Then you
ay be ſure that you have ſome degrees
f True Faith in *Jeſus Chriſt*, and there-
re that *Chriſt* is yours, that *God* is yours,
hat *All* is yours. For this is ſuch a
Qualification as hath the Promiſe, both

of

of the Life that now is, and alſo of th
that is to come.

By the Queſtions we may Exam
our Condition. For after this man
is Faith Wrought in us; Such are
Preparatives, ſuch is the Nature, a
ſuch are the Effects of a True Faith,
are Implyed in theſe Queſtions; So t
if we can in ſome good Meaſure ma
Underſtanding and Affectionate Anſw
to them all; Then we may be ſure th
we have a True Faith in *Chriſt*; But
either we know him not, or deſire n
to Accept of him, or care not to Ob
him, we have then cauſe to think that
do not Believe in him; and if we thi
otherwiſe, we do but Deceive our Soul

Now if upon Examination had, w
Find that we want Faith, we mu
be Diligent in uſing the Means whereb
to get it, which is by Reading and Hea
ing of the Word of God, and Conferi
about it. For Faith cometh by Hearin
and Hearing by the Word. If we fi
that we have this Faith, we muſt
careful to Keep it, and to Increaſe it, b
the Word, by the Sacraments, and b
Prayer.

Th

The Third Queſtion.

UPon this that hath been Spoken, another Queſtion may be Raiſed to this Purpoſe. I do in ſome Meaſure know who Chriſt *is, and I do believe that he is a Saviour All-Sufficient, and that there is no other way to Salvation, but Him, and that whoſoever believeth on him ſhall not Periſh: and I my ſelf would fain believe in him. But how may I know that I have Right to believe in him, and that the Invitations to Faith do Concern me? How may I know whether I ſhould be Welcome, or not, If I ſhould be ſo Bold as to come unto him?*

Anſwer.

For our Encouragement herein, and that we may come the more Boldly unto the Throne of Grace, we muſt know, that *Chriſt* is a Common Saviour, he is the Saviour of the World; and in regard of the All-Sufficiency of his Merits, there is not one of thoſe, whoſe Nature he took, unto whom his Merits, are not Communicable; neither is there

any one, who in that reſpect may not truly be ſaid to be Savable. *The Promiſe is made to You, and to your Children, and to all that be afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall Call, Acts* 2. 39. Now if you deſire to know, whether you be one of thoſe, whom he doth call to believe in him; Conſider then whether or no, you be Senſible of your Miſery, and Burdened with your Sins; whether your Deſire be to be eaſed of your Sins, and to be Partaker of Chriſt, and of thoſe Benefits and Comforts that be in him. For if we be thus Qualified, we may be Confident, that we are of the Number of thoſe, whom he doth *Seriouſly* invite to come unto him, and to Depend upon him. And hereof you have a Witneſs in your ſelf, and Gods own Hand to ſhew for it, to your greater Comfort. For thoſe are his own Words; Come unto me *all ye that Labour and be Heavy Laden* and I will give you Reſt, *Mat.* 11. 28. And again, *If any Man Thurſt*, let him come unto me and Drink, *John* 7. 37. Unto ſuch *Thirſty Souls* was Chriſt ſent, he came to ſpeak Peace to ſuch as are *Weary*, and *Broken-Hearted*, and to ſet at

Liberty

Liberty ſuch as are *Bruiſed*. So that if we, finding what a Miſery it is to be in Sin, and to want a *S*aviour, have thereupon an Earneſt deſire to be Delivered from this Miſery, we may be as ſure, that he calls upon us to come unto him, as if our very Names were Specified in theſe Invitations: Being thus Qualified, we may come Boldly, and upon our coming, ſhall be ſure to find Reſt; But without this Badg, we have no Warrant at all to Expect a Welcome. *They that do thus Hunger and Thirſt after Righteouſneſs ſhall be Filled; but they that be Rich* in their own Conceits, and are not Senſible of any Wants, *theſe he ſends Empty away.*

The Fourth Queſtion.

BUt if I find that I want this Sorrow, what Courſe ſhould I take, to bring my Heart to be Humbled for my Sin?

Anſwer.

To this end, let a Man Examin himſelf by the Law of God. For by the Law is the Knowledg of Sin. And let him duly

think upon that fearful Curſe of God whereunto every the leaſt Sin doth make us Liable. Let him diligently Conſider, how Ugly and Lothſome Sin doth make us in the ſight of God, and what a Fearful thing it is to be deprived of the Love of God, and the Joycs of Heaven, and what a Miſery it is to be expoſed to the Wrath of God, and the Torments of Hell. Let him ſeriouſly Ponder what a Miſery it is to loſe the Soul. Let him throughly weigh the Nature of Eternity, and the Strictneſs of that Account that is to come; and the Severity of that Sentance, which in that laſt and Dreadful Day ſhall be Pronounced upon all Impenitent Sinners, when they ſhall be Adjudged to that Everlaſting Fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his Angels. All theſe are of Singular uſe to Wound our Souls, and to Effect our Hearts with Sorrow for our Sins. It is the Law that makes way for the Goſpel: For thus *John* the Baptiſt, by Denouncing the Judgments of God upon wicked Courſes, prepared the way for our Bleſſed Saviour. But eſpecially, let him Conſider how great things God hath done for him.

For

For as there is no greater Obligation to Obedience, then the Loving Kindneſs of the Lord: So there is nothing that doth more Aggravate our Sins, and ſo conſequently our Miſery; And therefore nothing that can tend more to the breaking of the Heart, then the Conſideration of the Bounty, and long Suffering of God to us-ward. And this plainly appears by that courſe which the Prophet *Nathan*, at the Lord's Appointment, took with *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. For by ſetting before his Eyes *Gods* many and wonderful Mercies vouchſafed, and his own extream Ingratitude, and ill Requital of ſo great Goodneſs, he was conſtrained to Cry out with Shame and Sorrow, *I have Sinned againſt the Lord.*

And amongſt all the Mercies of God, there is none that doth more deſerve to take up all our thoughts, then that Departure of Chriſt, which he Accompliſhed at *Jeruſalem*; Neither is there any thing that doth more tend, either to Preſerve us from Sin, or to Humble us for our Failings, then the Death of our Saviour.

For ſuppoſe the Lord Jeſus ſhould

preſent himſelf unto us, when we are about to commit any *Sin*, or after we have done it, as he was Hanging upon the Croſs, with his Sides Scourged, his Face Buffetted, his Hands and Feet Nailed, his Head Crowned with Thorns, his very Heart Pierced, his whole Body upon the Rack, and Trickling down with Drops of Blood, and ſpeaking unto us after this, or the like manner: "Behold, if ever Sor-"rows were like unto my Sorrows; and "yet all this was but the Puniſhment of "thy Sins. It is thy *Sins* that have "brought me to all theſe Torments; and "canſt thou delight in that which was "the cauſe of ſuch Miſery? All this "have I done for thy Good, and is this "the Requital of my Love? I have born "thy Sins, that thou might'ſt be eaſed; "mine Hands were Bound, that thine "might be Freed; my Sides were *Scour*-"ged, that thine might be *Spared*; my "Cheecks were Buffetted, that thine "might be Kiſt: my Head was Crowned "with Thorns, that thine might be "Crowned with Glory; and is this thy "Kindneſs to thy Friend, thus to return "me Hatered for my good Will? Haſt

"thou

"thou not put me to Pains enough al-
"ready, but that thou muſt Rake in my
"Wounds, and make a Sport of my
"Miſery? Or if thou wilt not Pity me,
"yet Pity thy ſelf. For can that be
"Light to thee, which Coſt me ſo Heavy?
"Or ſhalt thou eſcape the Cup, that art
"a Sinner, when my beloved Father
"would not ſpare me that was but a
"Surety?

Suppoſe (I ſay) that the Lord *Jeſus* ſhould prefent himſelf, and ſpeak unto us, after this or the like manner, would not ſuch a ſight make our Bowels to Yearn, and ſuch words Cut us to the very Heart? Doubtleſs it were enough to make the Dryeſt Eyes to wiſh for Tears of Blood, and the Hardeſt Heart of the moſt Obſtinate Sinner, to become in the midſt of his Body, like Melting Wax, thus to hear and to look upon him whom they have Pierced: Yea, it is Impoſſible for any Man to think on this, and to go on in Sin, but ſuch as could be content to Crucifie again the Lord of Glory.

And thus you ſee, what are the Chiefeſt helps to Humiliation, and by what means our Harts may be brought

be deeply Affected with Sorrow for our Sins.

Hereupon a timorous Heart will be ready to Reply yet further, after this Manner.

The Fifth Question.

BI this Course, and by these, and the like Meditations, I confess that I have been brought in some Measure to be sorry for my Sins, and now I would fain be Eased of them; and it is my desire to believe in Christ, *but I fear that as yet I am not enough* Humbled; *I fear I have not* so great Measure *of Sorrow, as may make me Capable of this Invitation; And my Heart is so Hardened, that I cannot Grieve and Morn for my Sins so much as I should, and would do; and therefore I fear, that as yet I have no Right to the Comforts of the Gospel.*

Answer.

True it is, that Sorrow for Sin makes ready an Heart prepared for the *Lord*; and as usually in the course of Nature, there

ere is no Birth without ſome Pain: So the Work of Grace, there is no Regeneration, (that of Infants in Baptiſme excepted,) without ſome Sorrow. t as there are degrees of Pain in the tural Birth: So in the Spiritual Birth, ere are degrees of Sorrow. Some omen have a Quick Diſpatch, others ve a more Tedious Travel: And ſo it in the New Birth, all are not Pained ke. Some there be that go Mourning the Day long, yea, Day after Day, hereas unto others, Heavineſs indures t as it were for a Night, and Joy cometh the Morning. We muſt know there-re, and that for our Comfort, that it is t the *Quantity*, but the *Quality* of Sorw, that God looks after; neither matrs it ſo much, how great our Sorrow , as how True it is.

If a Youth, upon due Examination d, be found fit for the Univerſity, his utor never demands how long he hath en at School, how harſhly he hath en dealt withall, how often he hath en Whipt, before he could come to that rfection; All that he looks after, is, hether or no he be fit to be Admitted:

So

So it fares with us; The Law is chief School-Master to bring us unto Christ, and this it doth, partly by discovering unto us our Sins, whereby we see that we need a Saviour; and partly by Threatning of us with the Curse, whereby we are made more careful to look out after this Saviour, and more willing to accept of him, and for our own ease Submit unto him, when once we have found him. Now when we can be content to Accept of *Christ* upon any Terms then are we ready for him, then are we to be Admitted unto him. And when we do seek unto *Christ* for this Admission, regards not so much, how long were at School under the Law, how often we were Lashed by it, or how Sorely have Smarted under it: But all that looks after; is, whether we be fit to come unto him. Consider therefore with your self, had you ever such a Sight and Sorrow for your Sins, as made you weary of them? and out of Love with them and willing to be eased of them; Desirous of Interest in *Christ*, and ready to Accept of *Christ* upon any Terms, rather then to go without him? Is it your

rief that you cannot be more Sorrow-
i, and do not you desire as much to be
r pt from Sin for the time to come, as to
t ve all that Pardoned that is past? Sure-
e, if you stand thus Affected, then are
u fitted, and made ready for *Christ*;
d whether your Sorrow were great or
tle, yet it is a Token, that it was a
ue and a Godly Sorrow, because it
orketh Repentance unto Salvation,
ever to be Repented of.

It may be yet further Objected, hus:

The Sixth Question

I Confess that I have been Grieved for my Sins, and I have been desirous to be-lieve in Christ: *But I fear that my Sorrow is not Good, nor my Faith Sound, because my Obedience is so Faulty; For I am not so willing to forsake all my Sins, nor so careful to Yeild* Christ *Obedience, as I should be, or if I am willing so to do, yet mine Infirmities, and my Failings are such, and so many, that I fear my Sorrow, and my Faith, are not such at they ought to be.*

Answer.

Anſwer.

Certain it is, that *S*orrow for Sin w
nothing avail us without Amendment
Life; the Wicked muſt *forſake* h
ways, if he expect Pardon, *Iſa.* 55.
And it is he that Confeſſeth his *S*ins, a
Forſaketh them, that ſhall find Merc
Prov. 28. 13. If we willingly allow o
ſelves in the Practice of *any thing* d
pleaſing unto *God*, our Condition is da
gerous. If we ſay, that we abide in *Chri*
we muſt walk as he walked, or elſe w
deceive our own Souls, 1 *John* 2. 6. If w
ſay, that we have Fellowſhip with *God*, an
yet walk in Darkneſs, we Lye, and th
Truth is not in us, 1 *John* 1. 6. And if
be not our Study and Exerciſe to yie
Chriſt an Univerſal Obedience, our Fait
is but Preſumption; our Peace is but S
curity; our Hopes are but *S*hadows; an
our Expectation will Periſh.

But if we have *an Hearty Deſire, and Sincere Endeavour in all things to live H neſtly*, we may not from our Failings & In perfections, preſently Conclude, that we a not *S*anctified at all, that we have n

Faith

ith, no Intereſt in *Chriſt*, no Love of *d* in us. For Perfections is not to be tained unto, while we be in the Body; t *Sincerity* is that which may be had, d Affords unto us matter of Comfort; r the Lord loves them that do *follow ter Righteouſneſs*, *Pro.* 15.9. And they hoſe ſincere Deſire and Endeavour it is have Reſpect to all the Commandments, e Accepted of him. If it be our Unined Deſire, *S*tudy and Endeavour, in bedience unto *Chriſt*, to do whatſoever Commandeth; if it be our care to lenſe our ſelves from all Filthineſs both of eſh and Spirit, and to perfect Holineſs the Fear of God, and not Wickedly depart from him in any thing: I ſay, it be our Unfained Deſire, Study and ndeavour, ſo to do, we may ſafely Conude, notwithſtanding all our Imperctions, that our *S*orrow is Good, and ur Faith *S*ound, and that our *S*ins are rdonable, and our Service is Accepted, d our Souls ſhall be *S*aved. For in *Gods* ccount, and Acceptation, that goes for *Clean Life* which is not Stained with *ilful Pollutions*, and whoſe Obedience is tended to the utmoſt of his Kdowledge,

and

and hath withall a purpoſe to amend what *God* ſhall hereafter make him know to be Sinful ; to that Man is allowed the Opinion of Gracious.

See further of this Point, in Anſwer to Objection 16.

The Seventh Queſtion.

IF theſe things be ſo, I find then that my Condition at the preſent is Good ; and if I were ſure to Dye in this Eſtate, I make no doubt but I ſhould be Happy. But I find that I ſhall not Continue in this Condition, for my Enemies are Many, and Mighty, Crafty, and Watchful, and I my ſelf prone to Sin, and apt to fall from my Steadfaſtneſs ; and I find by Experience that many who have begun in the Spirit, have ended in the Fleſh, and their latter Eſtate have been worſe then their Beginnings. This makes me to fear that I ſhall not Continue Faithfull unto the Death ; And yet without this Continuance, I ſhall never obtain the Crown of Life.

Anſ.

Answer.

All these things I confess are True; ch are our Enemies, such is our Weak- ss, and the Misery of those that do rn back from the Holy Commandment ven unto them, is such, that it had en better for them not to have known e way of Truth, 2 *Pet.* 2. 21. For they ll Lose those things that they have done, d their Portion shall be with Unbelie- rs. So that a Man cannot chuse but have use to Fear. Nevertheless, there is omfort in *God* against this Fear also; ea, *This very Fear of Falling away*, hath it matter of Consolation, for it is a eans to keep us from departing from od, *Jer.* 32. 40. *And I will make an Ever- sting Covenant with them, that I will not rn away from them, to do them Good; but will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they all not depart from me.*

Many there be, that having begun well, o yet at length grow weary of well do- g, and so lose what they have done; nd therefore let him that thinketh that standeth, take heed least he fall: But

yet

yet let not our Hearts be troubled, let not be diſmayed with Fear; for the P ſeverance of ſuch as are *Juſtified and San fied in Deed and in Truth*, is certain, a the Foundation of *God* ſtandeth ſure, t *Lord* knoweth who are his, and he kno eth how to deliver them out of Temp tion. In further Anſwer to this Objecti and the better to Comfort us againſt t Fear, take ſpecial Notice of theſe Texts Scripture, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *Who are kept by Powers of God through Fath unto Salvati ready to be revealed in the laſt time.* Jo 10. 27, 28, 29. *My Sheep hear my Voi and I know them, and they follow. An give unto them Eternal Life, and they ſh never Periſh, neither ſhall any Man pl them out of my Hand. My Father wh gave them me, is greater then all: And Man is able to pluck them out of my Fath Hand.* 2 Chro. 16. 9. *For the Eyes of t Lord run to and fro throughout the wh Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf them whoſe Heart is perfect towards him.*

The Eighth Question.

BUT if the Perseverance, and so Salvation of such as are in Deed and in Truth, *the Saints of God, be so sure and certain, what mean those frequent Caveats which we meet with in the Scripture? What mean those frequent Exhortations to Perseverance?*

Answer. The Perseverance of such is sure and certain, howbeit *God* brings it to pass by means; It is wrought in them by *God*, and yet their own endeavours also are required; And these Caveats and Exhortations are the means which God hath sanctified for the exciting of their endeavours, and for their Preservation from Apostacy.

Caveats we have many, and many Threatnings; Exhortations many, and many Promises, such as are, *Take heed to your selves. Watch in all things. Be stedfast and unmoveable, continue faithful unto the Death, and I will give thee the Crown of Life. The latter end of backsliders shall be worse then their beginning*, &c. By which, and other like passages, we are not to think, either that perseverance is in our own Power, or that the

condition of *Gods Peculiar People* is mutab
in regard of him; But they do imply, ho
prone we are to Sin, in regard of o
ſelves; And they ſhew, that our ow
endeavours are required for the worki
out of our Salvation; and they are t
means ſanctified of *God*, for the preven
ing of Sin, and for the exciting of o
Care, and ſo for the Preſerving of us un
his heavenly Kingdom.

And whereas we are ſaid to be ke
by the power of God; We may not ſo u
derſtand it, as if we our ſelves might in t
mean time ſit ſtill and do nothing: We a
kept by *God*, and yet we alſo muſt keep o
ſelves: It is *God* that keepeth us, & yet we
ſo muſt Watch & Pray. But we are ſaid
be kept by *God*, for our greater Encourag
ment. For if our endeavours be ſince
though they be but weak, yet they w
be Effectual, becauſe we have ſuch
mighty Helper: And withal it is to teac
us, to whom we ought to aſcribe all t
Glory, when our endeavours becom
Effectual. It is *God* that muſt have t
Glory of it, for it is by his power th
we are kept, who worketh in us both
will and to do, of his own good Pleaſu

Be ſtrong therefore in the Lord, and in the power of his Might; He that is with us is Mightier then they that be againſt us. And therefore we need not fear; for neither the power, nor the policy of Hell ſhall prevail againſt the People of God; And the Mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it, *Mat.* 16. 18.

The Ninth Queſtion.

I Make no doubt of the power of God, I know that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him: but I doubt of his Will, I fear that he will not do it.

Anſwer.

Surely this is a needleſs fear; for his love is Everlaſting, his Gifts and Calling are without Repentance; and whom he loveth, to the End he loveth them. And therefore, *Fear not, the Lord will not forſake his People, for his own Names ſake, becauſe it hath pleaſed him to make you his People,* 1 Sam. 12. 22. So that if once he hath loved us ſo well, as to ſet us apart for himſelf; he loveth himſelf better, then to forſake us. And though our Unworthineſs deſerve that *God* ſhould deny us, yet his Faithfulneſs is ſuch, that he cannot deny himſelf.

Think therefore upon his love; Medi
tate upon his Power; Call to mind h
Promiſe; Forget not his Truth; An
commit the keeping of your Soul unt
him in well doing. Care you to do wel
God will care for the reſt: For, *he preſerve*
the Souls of his Saints, he delivereth the
out of the hand of the Wicked, Pſal. 79. 1

The Tenth Queſtion

But ſeeing that mine own endeavours a
required for the working out of m
Salvation; And ſeeing that my aſſurance
Salvation cannot be found, unleſs my care an
diligence, in the conſtant uſing of all goo
means tending thereunto, be every way an
ſwerable: Shew me, I pray you, by wha
means I may be Enabled to continue patient
in well doing, that ſo at the laſt I may obta
Eternal Life,

Anſwer.

Hereunto many things are uſeful, th
chiefeſt of which are theſe following,

1. *Labour to be ſincere*, by conſiderin
that all our ways are before *God*. To wal
before *God* is the way to be Perfect, an
ſincerity is the way to Perſeverance. Fo
the Righteous ſhall hold on his way, an
he that hath clean Hands, ſhall grow
ſtronge

ronger & ſtronger, *Job* 17.6. But he whoſe heart is not upwright before *God*, will ſtart aſide in the time of Tryal; See 1 *Jo.* 2.19. *Labour to overcome the World*, that ſo neither the Cares & Glory of it may too deeply affect us, nor yet the Croſſes and Troubles of it, too much affright us. For each of theſe are great hinderances to the Practice of Piety. Perſecution is that heat, that doth wither the Word, and by it ſome are made to deny their Maſter; And the Cares of the World, are the Thorns that choke the Word, and a means whereby it becomes unfruitful. *For the love of Money, is the root of all Evil, which while ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the Faith,* 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. Arm your ſelf therefore againſt both theſe: and to this end conſider with your ſelf, and think often upon that of our Saviour, *Mat.* 16. 26. *What is a Man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul.* And upon that, *Mat.* 8. 38. *He that is aſhamed of me, of him will the Son of Man be aſhamed,* &c. and upon that, 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. *If we Suffer with him, we ſhall Reign with him: But if we Deny him, he will alſo Deny us.* And learn to diſcern between thoſe things that

be ſeen, and the things that be not ſeen. For the things that be ſeen, are but Temporal; but the things which are not ſeen are Eternal, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18.

3. *Watch in all things*, for our Enemies are many, and Security is dangerous, and Sin is ſo deceitful, that it will quickly harden us: And this is certain, a Man never yields to his own corrupt diſpoſition for the commiting of any Evil, but he is ordinarily more willing to the ſecond Act then to the firſt; And who then can tell how far he may go aſtray, that doth but once give way to his own Corruption.

4. *Labour to grow in Grace*; and in the knowledg of our *Lord* and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*, by conſidering that our Labour cannot be in vain in the *Lord*. This *endeavour to grow in Grace* is a ſpecial means to keep us from being drawn away with the errour of the Wicked: But ſtanding ſtill, is in danger of turning back, and luke-warmneſs is the way to grow key cold.

5. *Diſpiſe not Prophecying*, if you would not quench the Spirit, if we would not be weary of well-doing, we muſt wait upon the Word: *For that is able to build us*

nd to give us an Inheritance among them hat are Sanctified, Acts 20. 32.

And laſtly, *We muſt pray without ceaſing,* hat he who hath begun a good work in us, would alſo finiſh it, and grant that our whole Spirit, Soul and Body, may be kept blameleſs unto the coming of our *Lord Jeſus.* This is the way to continue in well-doing, and ſo running we ſhall Obtain.

The Eleventh Queſtion.

BUT though my Soul may be cared for, yet my Body may be in want. I want already many things that be Neceſſary; Or at leaſt, I fear that I ſhall want ſuch things as be Needful for me; And this fear makes my Life the more Fearful.

Anſwer.

Doubtleſs, if our Souls be cared for, other things may the leſs trouble us; howbeit, againſt thoſe things alſo there is matter of Comfort in *Jeſus Chriſt.* He that regards the Soul, will not neglect the Body; and he knows what we have need of: And if we be of his Family, he will be ſure to provide for us. He is *Able* enough to help us, for the whole Earth is the *Lords,* and the Fulneſs thereof: And

of his *Will* we have no cauſe to doubt, for he hath promiſed, That if we ſeek firſt the Kingdom of *God*, and his Righteouſneſs *all theſe things* ſhall be added, as it were over and above, and into the Bargain, *Matth.* 6. 33. And he hath ſaid, That he will with-hold *no good thing* from them that Fear him, *Pſal.* 34. 9, 10. Whereupon we may ſafely conclude, That if he keep any thing from us, it will be good for us to be without it: So that we may well ſay with the Prophet *David*, *The Lord is my Shepherd, I cannot want*, Pſal. 23. 1. For he *that hath given us* Chriſt *how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things*? Rom. 8. 32.

The Twelfth Queſtion.

I Have been a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief; I have gone through much Miſery already, and many are the Croſſes and Troubles that are upon me at the preſent, and I fear that there be more and worſe yet to come: So that ſometimes I begin to think that the Lord doth not love me, and I am ready to doubt what will become of me. And I fear that my Patience will one day be Tryed, and that I ſhall faint in the day of Evil. Shew me therefore, I pray you, how

may be Comforted againſt this fear; and how I may be Enabled to wade through all with Chriſtian Patience.

Anſwer.

True it is, that the Croſſes and Troubles, which Men ſhall meet withal in the way to Heaven, are matters of Offence, and into ſome they are very Powerful, turning them back from the hope laid before them, to the embracing of this preſent World. But if we would think upon things aright, in the midſt of Miſery, we ſhould have comforts enough to refreſh our Souls. Neither is there any trouble that can befall us, in the midſt of which they have not matter of ſtrong Conſolation, *which being Juſtified by Faith, are at peace with God, through Jeſus Chriſt.*

Now to the end that we may be the better Comforted againſt all Croſſes, let us make uſe of theſe few Conſiderations following,

1. Conſider that it is no new or ſtrange thing to be exerciſed with Afflictions; Neither are Croſſes and Troubles *of themſelves* an argument of *Gods* hatred, but rather a token of his Love, and a witneſs of our Adoption, if we bear them Patiently,

tiently, and make good uſe of them. There is not any Affliction incident to the Nature of Man, which ſome one or other even of *Gods* own dear Servants and Children, have not been exerciſed withal. Look upon *David*, and *Jacob*, and *Joſeph*, and *Job*, and *Paul*, and all that Cloud of Witneſſes made mention of, *Heb.* 11. And we ſhall find, that through *many Afflictions*, they all entred into the Kingdom of *God*. Nay, look upon the Captain of our Salvation, and we ſhall find, that even he himſelf was made *perfect through Sufferings*, *Heb.* 2. 10. And this muſt needs be a ſpecial means to bear all with the greater Patience, when we ſhall know and conſider, that though our Afflictions be for Number many, and for Nature grievous, yet they are but the meaſure of our Betters.

2. Conſider that *God* hath promiſed never to leave us nor forſake us, *Heb.* 13. 5. And his preſence alone is ſupport ſufficient even in the worſt of Miſeries. How can *Jacob* be afraid to go down into *Egypt*, when *God* himſelf hath ſaid, he will go with him? *Gen.* 46. 34. *God* hath made the like promiſe unto us, and therefore if he

e bid us go into Troubles; if he com-
and us to walk even through the Valley
f the ſhadow of Death, yet we need
ear no Evil, as long as he is with us: For,
if God be with us, who can be againſt us?
Rom. 8. 31.

3. Conſider, that unto ſuch as do be-
lieve in *Chriſt*, the nature of Afflictions
is wholy altered; for their Sting is pull'd
out, and their Bitterneſs is allayed: They
may ſavour of *Anger*, of *Wrath* they do
not; *Croſſes* they may be, *Curſes* they
are not: They may be *Chaſtiſements* for
our Correction, but they are not *Judg-
ments* for our Confuſion. For *Chriſt* hath
Suffered, *what ever Wrath* was due unto us,
by reaſon of our Sins: And if we be
once reconciled unto *God* by Faith in
Chriſt, there is more matter of Comfort in
the aſſurance of his Love, then there can
be of Dejection in the greateſt Trouble.

4, Conſider that *God* intends nothing
but Good unto us in his ſharpeſt Dealings
with us: For it is all to humble us; and
to prove us, and to do us good at our
later End; all is for our profit, that we
may be partakers of his Holineſs. For
hereby he reforms what hath *been amiſs* in
us

us in times paſt; *hereby our iniquity ſhall be purged, and this is the Fruit, to take away our Sin*, Iſa. 27. 9.

Hereby he prevents Sin in us for the time to come, as he did St. *Paul*, unto whom there was ſent the Meſſenger of Satan to buffet him, leſt he ſhould have been exalted above meaſure, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7.

Hereby he doth wean us from the Love of the World, and Worldly Vanities. As long as all goes well with us, we are ready to ſay with St. *Peter*, *It is good to be here*; But when once we begin to be Afflicted, then preſently with the *Prodigal*, our *minds are homewards*.

Hereby he deals with us as the Husband-Man doth by the Vine, he Pares and Prunes us, to make us the more Fruitful, *John* 15. 2.

Hereby he doth exerciſe our Faith and Patience, and makes tryal of our ſincerity, as he did by *Job*. And ſo in this he lays the Ground of our greater Glory: For greater Afflictions require greater Patience; and the greater our Patience is, the greater ſhall be our future Happineſs.

And the conſideration of this muſt needs be a means to perſwade us to Patience:

nce: For if we can willingly endure marting-Water for the clearing of our yes; and bitter Pills, and ſharp Lances r the health of our Bodies: much more ught we to bear with patience the ſmart- g hand of Almighty *God*, for the health f our Souls. There is no Affliction in- eed Joyous, for the preſent, but Grievous; ut after it worketh the peaceable fruit of ighteouſneſs to ſuch as are exerciſed hereby, *Heb.* 12. 11.

Conſider that if we do continue faith- l unto the Death, we ſhall receive a rown of Life. And if we do but have an ye to *that recompence of reward*, we ſhall aſily be drawn, as *Moſes* was, to eſteem he *reproach of Chriſt* greater Riches then he Treaſures of *Egypt*; and to chuſe ra- her to ſuffer Affliction with the People of *od*, then to enjoy the pleaſures of *Sin* for a eaſon, *Heb.* 11. 25, 26. For the happineſs f that Kingdom, which is to come, is ich, that our Bleſſed Saviour accounts it matter of *Comfort* againſt all *fear* whatſo- ver, as it doth plainly appear by thoſe words of his, *Luke* 12. 32. *Fear not little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you the Kingdom.* Where the only

Argu-

Argument that he makes uſe of for th
encouraging of his little Flock, is th
Hopes of the Kingdom. And again b
that place, *Matth.* 5. 11, 12. *Bleſſed ar*
ye, when Men ſhall Revile you, and Perſe
cute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of Evi
againſt you Falſly, for my ſake. Rejoyce
and be exceeding glad; for great is your Re
ward in Heaven, for ſo Perſecuted they th
Prophets which were before you. Wherei
our Saviour doth hearten his Diſciples a
gainſt Perſecution, only upon this ground
becauſe their Reward ſhould be great i
Heaven. And ſurely in St. *Paul's* Compu
tation, the preſent Affliction is not wo
thy the ſpeaking of, in regard of tha
Glory that ſhall be revealed, *Rom.* 8. 1
Neither is there indeed, any compariſon a
all between them; for the one is but
light and *momentary Affliction*, the other i
a far *more exceeding and eternal weight*
Glory, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. So that this Goodne
of *God* in the Land of the Living, is
nough to keep us from Fainting under th
heavieſt Burthen: For though our ou
ward Man decay, yet while we have a
Eye to this Joy ſet before us, our inwar
Man will be renewed Day by Day. Fith
therefo

therefore is the Hope of this Happineſs, called the *Anchor of the Soul*, and the *Helmet of Salvation*; for by this *Anchor* we are preſerved in the deep Waters, by this *Helmet* we are Protected in the times of Danger; and by flying unto this *Hope*, we are ſure to find Refuge in the Day of Evil.

And thus we may be Comforted againſt Evils preſent. Now as for thoſe that are yet to come, we may thus Reſolve, *Either they ſhall not come at all*: For *God* will ſtand between Us and Harm, and keep us quiet from fear of Evil: Without his Providence nothing can befall us, and therefore nothing ſhall befall us to do us Hurt: For he is a *God* that delighteth in the Proſperity of his Servants.

Or if they do come, *Yet the Lord will deliver us out of all*: there ſhall be an end. Enlargement will come, and he will deliver his People, even becauſe he hath a Favour unto them.

And in the mean time, *He will ſupport us in them*, till Deliverance do come; and his Grace will be ſufficient for us. *For God is faithful, and will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are Able*: *But with the temptation*

temptation alſo make away to Eſcape, that we may be Able to bear it, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13.

And *he will alſo give us Benefit by them*. For he maketh all to work together for good, to thoſe that love him, *Rom.* 8. 28. And thus we may be Comforted againſt our Fears alſo. In a word, there's none can know the way to Heaven, better than he that Dwells there. And therefore which way ſoever God leads us, it is ſafe to follow him. The Uneaſineſs of the way makes us think that it is the fartheſt way about; but the Lord knows it is the neareſt way Home. And whatſoever they ſeem to us, *Yet all the ways of the Lord are Mercy and Truth, unto ſuch as keep his Covenant, and his Teſtimonies*, Pſal. 25. 10.

The Thirteenth Queſtion.

MY Troubles are great, exceeding weighty and burthenſome, and there are no Sorrows like unto my Sorrows; and this is that, that doth ſo break my Heart, and drink up my Spirit.

Anſwer.

This is Anſwered in a word. It is but a Conceit of our own, to think our own Troubles the worſt, when as indeed they are but common Temptations: But if

the worſt, grant that there be none like them; yet if we ſhall compare them either with that which we have Deſerved: or with that which *Chriſt* himſelf for us hath Suffered; or with that weight of Glory that ſhall be Revealed, we ſhall then eſteem them all as nothing. And as great as they are, if we would but only look up and conſider Duly from whence they come, even that alone would be enough to make us Patient: For thus was it with *David*, he was Dumb, and opened not his Mouth, Conſidering who did it, *Pſal.* 39. 9.

The Fourteenth Queſtion.

BUT my Affliction is ſuch, that I am kept from Enjoying the liberty of the Houſe of God, and from Praying him in the Congregation.

Anſwer.

This muſt needs be troubleſome to Minds well Affected; howbeit if *God* himſelf reſtrains us, we may then be ſure that he requires not our Preſence. And in ſuch a caſe, if our Deſires be with the Congregation, even that Deſire will be Sufficient. Neither is the Lord ſo confined to the Congregation, but that he is

near to all, that call upon him Faithfully whatsoever they be, when necessity, and not neglect, is the reason of their Absence. And besides all this, if at any time, by reason of Age or Sickness, we are not able to do those things which we do desire, and did perform in the times of our Health and Strength, then shall a willing Mind be well pleasing unto God, and good Desires shall be Accepted. Yea, furthermore, this we must know for our Consolation, that a Patient submiting to the good will of *God*, is a *Worshiping of him*, as appears by that, *Job* 1. 20. 21. Where *Job* is said to Worship *God*, when he did with Patience and Contentedness Submit unto him. This is indeed, a Glorfying of God, and herein we acknowledg him to be our God, and in thus Submiting, we shall perform unto God as good Service as ever we did in all our Lives. For this is the Passive part of true Obedience, and the tryal of sincerity in other things. To serve the Lord when all goes well with us, is much; and it is altogether as much, if not more, to resolve to Trust in him though he should Kill us. And if we can

with

with *Job* hold fast our Righteousness, and in the Hour of Temptation not fall away, this is a true note of pure Religion, and a manifest Argument of Sincerity and Truth.

The Fifteenth Question.

AND yet after all this, I must Die; and when a few Years are come, I shall go the way whence I shall not Return; and the Fear of Death doth much Amaze me.

Answer.

Verily there is no solid Reason why it should: for God hath given us Victory over Death it self, through our Lord *Jesus Christ*. The Death of *Christ*, was the Death of Death. Death fastning upon him, to whom it was not due, lost its Sting, and so became less able to hurt those that had Deserved it. *Christ* hath pulled out the Sting of Death, by Dying for Sin; So that now, like a Bee, or Snake, without a Sting, it may Buz about us, and affright us, but it cannot hurt us. All the hurt that Death can do to such as believe in the Lord *Jesus*, is, to free them out of Prison, to put an end to their Days of Sin, to carry them home,

to their Fathers Houſe, to let them into their Maſters Joy, to pull down thoſe Mouldring Cottages, wherein they Dwell, and to Build them up to Immortality. For if we believe that *Jeſus* Died, and Roſe again, them alſo that Sleep in *Jeſus* ſhall God bring with him, and they ſhall be for ever with the Lord. And of this Happineſs the worſt kind of Death, that can befall us, cannot Deprive us. A Man may Die in Poverty, he may Die with Extreamity of Torments, he may Die by common Calamities, and yet he may Die in Faith; and ſo Dying, his End ſhall be Peace: *For Bleſſed are the Dead which Die in the Lord, even. ſo ſaith the Spirit*, &c. *Rev.* 14. 13. So that if we did but throughly underſtand the Nature of Death, and what it is to the People of God, we ſhould be ſo far from being afraid of it, that with Saint *Paul*, we ſhould rather deſire to be Diſſolved, becauſe then we ſhould be with Chriſt, which is the beſt of all.

To ſhut up this Point, and ſo likewiſe the whole matter concerning Affliction, this let me add to the reſt; That if we do deſire to get Good by the Medi-

tion

tions, and to be upheld with Comfort in the time of Trouble, we muſt *Continue inſtant in Prayer.* This is that Receipt, which the Holy Ghoſt Preſcribes to all ſorts of Perſons, againſt all manner of Grievances whatſoever, *James* 5. 23. This is that Remedy that is always at Hand, and never out of Seaſon. Yea, this is that Meſſenger, which being Diſpatched aright, was never ſent Empty away. Believe it, if a Man were in a caſe more deſperate then Death, in a place worſe then Hell, yet if there he could Pray Heartily, he ſhould find Comfort and Strength, even beyond Hope: for our Prayers uſe to be with the utmoſt of our Hopes, if not beyond them; and yet God doth uſe to be better to us then our Prayers.

The Sixteenth Queſtion.

I *See now that there is matter enough of ſolid Comfort in the Word of God. But the Unevenneſs of my walking makes me to doubt, that I have no Part nor Portion in thoſe precious Promiſes, which* God *hath made unto his People.*

Anſwer.

Promiſes I confeſs that are Miſ[illegible]ied,

[illegible]can

can afford to the Soul no solid Comfort. But from our Failings we may not presently conclude, That they do not at all belong to us: For God looks upon the Heart; and where Ability is wanting, the Will is accepted.

Are not your Failings your Grief? Are they not besides your Will? Are they not contrary to the Currant of your Desires, and the main bent of your Resolutions and Endeavours? Is it not your Endeavour to do the Will of God, though it cost you the parting with the Sweetest Sins, even your own Iniquity? And is it not your Resolution, that you will not wickedly Depart from God? If it be so, then notwithstanding your Failings, you may say with *David*, *I have kept thy Word:* For though this be not such a Measure of keeping as the Law requireth, yet it is such a keeping, as God accepteth: For he Accounteth such as keep themselves from wilful Sins, Upright and Innocent, through *Christ* their Strength, and their Redeemer, as appears by that Passage, *Psal.* 19. 13.

And this is a true Rule, whereby to proceed

proceed in the Judging of our ſelves. If a Man, that believes in *Chriſt*, continues in an unknown Sin, that cannot hinder the Uprightneſs of his Heart, ſo the Ignorance be not wilful; but the leaſt touch of knowledg, or wilfulneſs, *Mars* ſincerity. So that if our failings be not wilful, though they be many, yet they cannot hinder our Intereſt in the promiſes of God.

And what can we now object more? Do we doubt the truth of all theſe Promiſes? Surely we need not: For God is not a Man that he ſhould Lie, neither the Son of Man, that he ſhould Repent: Hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not do it? Hath he ſaid, and ſhall it not come to paſs? Was he ever yet worſe then his word? And have not we had Experience of his Love, as well upon our ſelves, as others? Is he not the Faithful and True Witneſs, and a God that is moſt zealous of his own Glory? Why then are we diſquieted? And why are our Hearts dejected within us? ſtill truſt in God, make ſtraight ſteps to your Feet: Pray for Faith in the Promiſes, and ſtir up your ſelf to take hold of *God*, tarry the Lords leaſure, and fear not;

Light is *Sown* for the Righteous, and ſt,
Gladneſs for ſuch as be upright in Heart ; er
It may lie Buried in the Ground out of Be
Sight for a Seaſon, it may be ſomewhat fro
long in coming up, and very unlikely to an
come to any Perfection ; Nevertheleſs, not
in *due Seaſon* we ſhall Reap, if we faint iev
not. And therefore caſt not away your Co
Confidence : For the worſt is paſt, the ent
good is begun, the beſt is at hand : Lift let
up therefore the Hands that hang down, ny
and ſtrengthen the Feeble Knees ; and run ſha
with Patience the Race ſet before us ; and Go
being partakers of ſuch precious Promiſes,
let us think upon them, believe in them, Jo
and live in them : and in ſo doing, we ab
ſhall rejoyce with Joy unſpeakable, and H
full of Glory.

Hear the Sum of all : *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 1. *There is no Condemnation*, and there's our Comfort : The ground hereof, is *Chriſt* ; the way unto it, is by Faith to be in him, the Evidence of it, *Is to walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit.* In the matter of Merit, *Chriſt* is all ; in matter of Inter-

eſt

ſt, and Application, *Faith* is all; in matter of Evidence, and Manifeſtation, *New Obedience* is all. Nothing can free us from Condemnation, but *Chriſt*; nothing can give us intereſt in *Chriſt*, but *Faith*; nothing can aſſure us that we do truly believe in *Chriſt*, and ſhall be delivered from Condemnation, but a care to be Obedient unto *Chriſt* in all things: wherefore let us ſo Believe, and ſo Live: for as many as walk according to this Rule, Peace ſhall be upon them, and upon the *Iſrael* of *God*.

Now the God of hope fill us with all Joy and Peace in believing, that we may abound in hope through the Power of the Holy Ghoſt, *Amen* and *Amen*.

In the Multitude of the Thoughts within me, thy Comforts Delight my Soul, Pſal. 94. 19.

FINIS.

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